

Marygrove

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MYSTIC TREES

MYSTIC TREES
BY MICHAEL FIELD

EVELEIGH NASH, LONDON



Hic Virgo puerpera,
Hic Crux salutifera :
Ambo ligna mystica.
Haec hyssopus humilis,
Illa cedrus nobilis :
Utraque vivifca.

From *Horae* of the Sixth Century.

CONTENTS

HYSSOP

PAGE

O TRINITY, THAT ART A BANK OF VIOLETS	13
THE PRESENTATION	14
MANY WATERS	16
NUBES LUCIDA	17
HOW OFTEN	19
THE WITNESS OF JOHN	20
I HAVE MOURNED UNTO YOU	22
GETHSEMANE	23
THEY TOOK JESUS	25
THE WITNESS	26
THE CAPTAIN JEWEL	27
SUNDOWN ON CALVARY	28
THE WINDING-SHEET	30
A FRIDAY NIGHT	32
THE FIVE SACRED WOUNDS	33
A CRUCIFIX	35
THE PASCHAL LAND	36
PARTING	38
ONE WAY OF HEARING MASS	40
WHITE PASSION-FLOWER	42
THOU COMEST DOWN TO DIE	43
O LOVELY HOST!	44

CEDAR

THE BLESSED TRINITY	47
NONDUM ERANT ABYSSI	48
THE STILLNESS IN PARADISE	50
SHE IS ONE	51
	7

	PAGE
THE PRESENTATION OF OUR BLESSED LADY—I	52
THE PRESENTATION OF OUR BLESSED LADY—II	53
A JUST MAN	54
ANNUNCIATION SILENCE	55
MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	56
PRAISES	57
CALLED EARLY	58
UNDER THE STAR	59
THE SHEPHERD SILENCE	60
CANDLEMAS	61
IN ARMS	63
PONDERING	64
THE HOLY INNOCENTS	65
RETURN	67
THE SILENCE OF NAZARETH	69
OUR LADY'S PRAYER	70
FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME OF MARY	71
STABAT MATER	73
LIGHT OF THE EYES	74
"BUT MARY SAT STILL IN THE HOUSE"	75
OUR MOTHER	76
THE DORMITIO	78
THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR BLESSED LADY	79
THE MYSTERY OF THE ASSUMPTION	80
EXITE, SION FILIAE	81

SWARD

TO A CUCKOO, INTERRUPTING PRAYER	85
A VERT SUNDAY	86
8	

	PAGE
THE BELOVED	87
HE WHOSE LIPS HAVE TOUCHED CHRIST'S LIPS	88
SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE	90
BAPTISM	91
THE ONLY ONE	92
BEFORE REQUIEM	93
THE HOMAGE OF DEATH	94
IN DIE OBITUS	97
PRAYER FOR THE LAPSED	98
"AND BLOODY SWEAT"	99
TOO LATE	100
THE ROSARY OF BLOOD : JOYFUL MYSTERIES	101
THE ROSARY OF BLOOD : SORROWFUL MYSTERIES	102
THE ROSARY OF BLOOD : GLORIOUS MYSTERIES	103
HOLY WEEK	104
A ROSARY OF THE STAR	105
TRULY THIS WAS THE SON OF GOD	107
THE OLIVE-SHOOT	108
PASCHAL PENANCE	109
OF THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR BLESSED LADY	111
O LAMB OF GOD	113
BIBE, DOMINE !	114
A DREAMER	115
A MOTHER OF BETHLEHEM IN JUDA	117
IN PRISON	118
QUI RENOVAT JUVENTUTEM MEAM	119
ST. MARY MAGDALEN'S SAILING	120
FEAST OF ST. AGNES	122
SONG	123
LOVELY, PURGATORIAL BLOOMS	124
THE BLESSED JULIANA	125

THE FIRST DAY

PENANCE	128
ELECT	129
DREAD ST. MICHAEL	130
MY INTERCESSORS	132
ARIDITY	133
RESERVATION	134
A PROFESSION	135
MOSS	136

THE DIVINE OFFICE	137
À CETTE HEURE OÙ J'ÉCRIS	138
ANSWERED PRAYER	139
THE OPEN AIR	140
WHERE THE BLESSED FEET HAVE TROD	141
"TO SEE HIM IN HIS PLACE"	142
AFTER MASS	143

A LITTLE WHILE

BELOVED, MY GLORY IN THEE IS NOT CEASED	144
SHE IS SINGING TO THEE, <i>DOMINE!</i>	145
CAPUT TUUM UT CARMELUS	146
FLOWERS	147

HYSSOP

O TRINITY, THAT ART A BANK
OF VIOLETS

*“Qui per Spiritum Sanctum semet ipsum obtulit
immaculatum Deo.”*

O TRINITY, that art a bank of violets,
Of thy first breath
Came the long sigh for death !
While Mary pondereth
What may the Angel's Salutation be—
Where there is no more Time, in Trinity,
The Holy Ghost begets, ?
Breathing as from a bank of violets,
That sweetness blowing through the Word
By which Christ is transferred
From Man unto the spotless Host,
That to His Father offereth
Himself from the deep spiceries of death.

THE PRESENTATION

THEY say it is a King
His Temple entering !

The great veil doth not rock
With gust and earthquake shock :

But all the air is stilled
As at a law fulfilled.

Dreams from their graves rise up—
Melchizedek with cup ;

Abraham most glad of heart,
A little way apart.

Mary, to keep God's Word,
Brings Babe and turtle-bird.

Lo, Simeon draweth in,
And doth his song begin !

Great doom is for her Son,
And Mary's heart undone.

Oh, Simeon is blest,
Christ in his arms is prest !

Mary's sweet doves are slain ;
She takes her Babe again :

And in her heart she knows
He will be slain as those :

And on her journey home
She feels God's Kingdom come.

MANY WATERS

“In Jordane lavit Christus ejus crimina.”

DIP Thou Thy glorious head
In Jordan's tide ;
And every river-bed is sanctified.

Wring out Thy lovely locks
Against the beam :
We catch the shining drops from the mid-stream.

O Water from Thy brow !
Can we forget
It will shed blood enow in a great sweat ?

All wonders on Thee wait ;
All fountains pray
Thou shouldst lustrate and make them gay.

Yea, of their element
Thou dost design,
With a few drops content, to make us Thine.

Lift Thou Thy head, fair Priest !
By Kedron's brink
The roses are increast that dip and drink.

NUBES LUCIDA

I

O FAIR, fair beauty of Thy Son !
Vesture, a white and golden one !
O hair straight down, that lays
 In such soft ways
 About the brow !
Father, wilt Thou allow
This Thy Desire, the Doting of Thine eyes,
 To die—in sacrifice ?

II

Father, the rose of that fair rose,
The tender flower—wilt Thou not close
 Phalanx of seraphim
 Protecting Him
 Against the will
 Of these who wait to kill ?
At the hill-base a troop of curs and knaves
 Is come with staves.

III

Father, there breaks from Thee one sigh—
As women with reft hands put by
 Some precious jewel-thing,
 Relinquishing :

Christ stands alone
Sad, on some mountain-stone,
And gazeth down into the mountain's base,
As into a well's face.

IV

O Cloud, that dost so wrathful bend ;
O lovely Flower for us to rend ;
O victim most complete
Laid at our feet ;
We lift the knife,
Sever the tender life,
And the great Cloud rolls back again content
Into the firmament !

HOW OFTEN

I

PHILIP has three loaves, but what are these ?

Jesus has the cornfields in His hand—

All the store of Egypt's granaries :

And the multitude at ease

Sitteth on the green grass in its flower.

II

Lo, His guests !—there is a table spread :

Jesus has a fragment in His hand.

One by one He prays them to be fed

With this bit of broken Bread . . .

And He sighs. It is the darkest hour.

THE WITNESS OF JOHN

HE taketh us
On a high mountain, nor forsaketh us,
But turneth round upon us, glistening
In face and raiment, as He were a King.
In converse we discover at His side
Moses, Elias . . . He is glorified,
The Son of God : and Peter would abide
Forever with these three, and prays to rear
Three tabernacles. And the light grows drear.
Some sin is on us that no wise we wist ;
We are closed up as in God's very fist ;
We cannot see : only there floats above,
Rumbling and murmuring as an angry love,
Some element in havoc that doth press
Against the idle word that Peter said.

I know not by what stroke,
Beneath that awful cloak,
Elias and the Law-giver are brought
To nothingness in the Eternal Thought :
For presently we are allowed,
Through adumbrations of the cloud,
To hear the Father's Voice in its caress,
As if from Chaos sped
Toward that belovèd Head—
Jealous and watered as of rain-drop tears
That Voice appears
In majesty on the cloud's breaking rim :
"Lo, this is my belovèd Son ; hear Him !"

The Lord is glorified ; we see
His Body as in glory it will be—
Nothing it lacks
Save of His Wounds the lovely tracks.

I, John, who lay upon His bosom, I
Must testify
I never saw Him—now
I see Him in the Father and rejoice :
He standeth meek amid His snows,
Flushed as a rose,
For we have heard that Voice.
How maiden in humility His brow !
Almost He whispereth “ No word of this !
It is our secret : I should take amiss
That of this hour one word be said,
Peter, till I am risen from the dead.”
And, having spoken, He looks back on me,
And in an instant my theology
Is given : and I know the Word is God.

I HAVE MOURNED UNTO YOU

WE have hushed all our sins away
To catch Thy breath as Thou dost pray.
How Thou dost mourn to us ! What sound
Comes up to us as from the ground !

A voice it is of mysteries,
A cry as from deep-bruised trees ;
And love, as when a hart doth pant,
And all the water-brooks are scant.

GETHSEMANE

I

THERE is a garden of deep roses spread,
A garden of deep roses : red and red
The culminating buds uncloset :
I cannot find upon the bed a leaf of fallen rose.

II

These roses are as portions of one flower ;
They congregate in unity of power—
Some in the rocks, some by the nook
Of cistus-trails that overhang, some washing by
the brook.

III

Why are they here ? So large of volume, great—
As swans from other birds take new estate—
Magnificent ! Their glow confutes,
As they had plucked up rubies by the roots.

IV

What fête do they attend, holding their dense
Profusion back as unburnt frankincense ?
A dark created round their blooms
Falleth, a loving dark to give their spices
tombs.

V

O roses, in the dark your edges grow more bright !
 Is there a moon—or light ?
 Some light must fall down and restore
 Your garden to the dew and sweet of nights before.

VI

There is a moon—a moon ? There is a face,
 Bent down before those roses, of a grace
 Most lovely in its charity . . .
 And angels up and down the memory.

VII

No man hath passed the door. I have mistook . . .
 Or did He enter crossing by the brook ?
 He pulls the roses, stem on stem,
 And calleth on His friends, and kisseth them.

VIII

Who is drawn hitherward ? What shall befall ?
 My heart is breathing at their festival :
 The roses are as a dark cup,
 Full of strange tribulations offered up.

THEY TOOK JESUS

I KNOW not what I am—I saw Him there !
I saw Him cross the brook,
With feet that shook,
And enter by the little garden-stair.

Am I of those who watch Him to betray ?
That little garden-path,
That way He hath—
I know the very turn where He will pray.

Judas I know . . . But who are these I mark,
Who come with torches' flare ?
I weep and stare . . .
Jesus is very safe, deep in the dark.

He broke forth from the flowers,
To front these hellish powers ;
A Rose of Sharon He,
Uplifted from the tree.

Oh, fair of Spirit He !
As Venus from the Sea,
So soft, so borne along,
He drew to that mad throng.

He questioned them ; He thought
He was the one they sought—
He is the only One . . .
They have bound Him, He is gone !

THE WITNESS

OH, Who is this they have crucified ?
They have not yet raised Him above :
They are drawn in a group aside,
His garments to divide :
On the ground He lieth, crucified—
Through the Heavens there beateth one wild
Dove.

THE CAPTAIN JEWEL

WE love Thy ruddy Wounds,
We love them pout by pout :
It is as when the stars come out,
 One after one—
We are
As watchers for the Morning Star.

The jewels of Thy Feet,
The jewels of Thy Hands ! . . .
Lo, a Centurion stands,
Openeth Thy Side : Water and Blood there beat
 In fountain sweet :
Our Master-jewel now we dote upon !

SUNDOWN ON CALVARY

I

WHERE art Thou, wandering Bird ?
Thy sweet voice is not heard
 On this wild day,
When the Father mourns the Son,
When the Son no Father hath,
And Thou hast but chaos for Thy path.

II

The Father keeps the Sepulchre,
The Son lies quiet there.
 Where is Thy place ?
 Where rest in a world undone ?
Holy Ghost, a multitude
Guards the Cross ; there hardly canst Thou
 brood.

III

To the dark waters haste ;
Stretch pinions on the waste ;
 There breathe, there play ;
Forsake the Wood !
There is no resting-place for Thee
On this lovely, noble, blighted Tree.

.

IV

But, lo, it is sundown ;
The bodies taken down ;
 Quiet the hill ;
The Tree drips blood on the path :
And, the jolted beams above,
Croons, calls across the evening-winds, a Dove !

THE WINDING-SHEET

“Tuum Sindonem veneremur, Domine.”

I

IN this is our humanity complete
That Joseph coming down the street
Bought for the Lord a winding-sheet.

II

Yours is the corse—now Pilate understands—
O women ! With fair linen in your hands,
Wrap tight, enwind the Body with strict bands !

III

Dearer these grave-clothes than the seamless coat
Woven of His Mother, than the crown, reed-
smote ;
Yea, for He learns our little part by rote.

IV

That cry from off the Cross was wide, was loud,
As He were parted from us. . . . For His shroud
We famish ! Women, as in fetters, shroud,

V

Bind Him our own, Jesus of Nazareth !
Sweet is your spice ; but of more sumptuous
breath
The redolence of that rich-blooded death.

VI

Tend Him as even now we tend the dead ;
Let tears in volume on His corse be spread ! . . .
This Winding-sheet, the napkin at His head,

VII

Lift them, when round the open tomb we meet ;
Bear them with pangs of laughter down the street ;
Lay them down low, kissing His Mother's feet !

A FRIDAY NIGHT

THE QUESTIONER

“LO, you have wounds and you are speeding fast !
The light is gone !
Have you no cloak to screen you from the blast ?
It is not well !”

THE ANSWERER

“Show me the way to Hell :
I must pass on.”

THE QUESTIONER

“There is indeed hard by a little gate :
But there thou shalt not go.
Thou art too fair ;
Golden thy hair doth blow.”

THE ANSWERER

“There I must go :
I have an errand there for those that wait,
Have waited for me long.”
I showed the gate.

Now is He shut within, and I am found
Alone with blood-stains on the ground.
Would I could go down to that dim
Murk of the shades to those that wait for Him !

THE FIVE SACRED WOUNDS

HAVE compassion on me !
I thought to worship Thy Wounds in Trinity,
The Wounds of Thy Hands, Thy Side, Thy Feet ;
I had no patience, no *Caritas*. . . .
Through Thy right Hand the nail doth pass !
 As a sheep standeth by
His fellow, waiting for his turn to die,
 The left hand droopeth free—
That is the Hand that *feels* the nail.
God, for my hardness pity me !

O Venerable Hands, O our delight !
We need them both : one bindeth tight
The Cup, one breaketh for all the Bread.
How pliantly they work ; they wave from side to
 side,
As weeds that wash in a low pool-tide,
In every motion to fulfil
A motion of the Father's will !
We need them both. O lovely in our sight,
O *Amor meus*, to be crucified !
O Hands, clear as a woman's in their light !

Have compassion ! Side by side
They place Thy Feet, and through each they gride ;
One breaketh before the other, yea,
There is a blow, and then silence, and then . . .
I will have patience, wait for the blow again.

When Mary wrapt those Feet with her hair
She was glad the two were there :
One with her hair she dried ;
One she fondled up against her cheek—
God, for my lack of loving chide !

A CRUCIFIX

I

THEE such loveliness adorns
On Thy Cross, O my Desire—
As a lily Thou art among thorns,
As a rose lies back against his briar.

II

Thou art as a fair, green shoot,
That along the wall doth run ;
Thou art as a welcoming open fruit,
Stretched forth to the glory of the sun.

III

Thou art still as one in sleep,
As the blood that Thou dost shed ;
Thou art as a precious coral-reef
That scarce lifteth himself from his bed.

IV

Thy limbs are so fine, so long,
'Mid the cords and nails that bind,
Thy body maketh a solemn song,
As a stream in a gorge confined.

THE PASCHAL LAND

I

“HAVE you been in the Paschal Land ?”
“O where, for I do not understand ?”
“It is in the forty days of grace,
Where any day one may see God’s Face ;
It is there, the Paschal Land.

II

“I am come from where it is—
In Jerusalem ; and where He goes,
Even He Himself. I am one of those,
I am one of the Witnesses.

III

“The flowers so blue in their bloom,
The lambs so nimble, so shrill in bleat—
Once they pursued, ran up to His Feet.
Fair land of the open tombs !

IV

“The Mother is there,
By the palm-trees, or in her abode ;
Peter, they say, passed the Lord on the road ;
One may meet Him anywhere.

V

By the way the cattle drink
 We feel there is blessing on the land ;
 The very old rise, listen, stand,
 Listen on the air, and do not think.

VI

“ He is as a man come home—
 Not yet seen of men about the place.
 As a neighbour He asks the grace
 Of a fish or a honeycomb :
 But I have not seen His Face.”

“ I come with you to the Paschal Land.”

PARTING

WE are gathered round Him, and we know
Very soon to Heaven He will go—
Tears are on our breath ; He hath upbraided.
How beautiful He looketh, shining
As He stood shining in the Father's Voice,
When Moses and Elias from His side had faded,
And He alone
In a great luminous cloud was shaded.

We rejoice, we love Him, we His own :
In the throbs that beat for God alone,
He ascends ; and to His skirts none clingeth,
Our Lover, no more He looks on us ;
Our Bridegroom—we offer the Bridegroom's Voice
To the muffling Cloud : the Bird high wingeth ;
We rejoice and look
Forth to the grand, blank spaces where He
singeth.

We must go home, there is blue sky and clear ;
There is no cause why we should linger here ;
Peter is started : no delaying !
I am glued to the ground, I cannot stir.
The Mother of Jesus delays awhile :
“ O Mother, is it for me Thou art staying ?
Thou stretchest Thine hands
Through Thy smiles—it is for me Thou art
praying.”

She is rejoicing, she who loves Him so ;
There is a rapture on her face as though
Lost to some lark in Heaven : and, after that,
We pass by Golgotha, the little mound
Where the land looks uneasy, pass the Brook,
The Garden and the Cedar where He sat . . .

I looked at her,
And in my heart I sang *Magnificat*.

ONE WAY OF HEARING MASS

. . . TO-DAY

I watch Thee all the way,
O lovely Wanderer, that Thou dost take
Down to the Altar for our sake.

I

The latch Thou turnest on
Thy Father's gate . . . art gone—
As workmen leave their homes and fill the street,
That wife and child may eat :
O humble Labourer,
Early Thou art astir !

II

For all Thou comest down ;
For tramp, for thief, for clown,
For yonder harlot to her lodging bent.
O Blessèd Sacrament,
Children Thy garment hem ;
Something Thou hast for them.

III

And now we veil our eyes :
Meek to Thy Sacrifice
Thou drawest ; and, in mystic agony,
Beyond our thought dost die,
Bearing Thy Father's pain
For man beloved in vain.

IV

Thou pleadest as from sin
 Pardon for us to win.
 O Prodigal, God speeding doth embrace
 Thine upturned Face ;
 And, for Thy sake, invest
 Us with His very best !

V

We leave Thine altars mild
 Most sweetly reconciled,
 Bearing to be beloved Thine awful way—
 And afterward all day,
 In little prayers and songs
 We muse upon Thy wrongs.

WHITE PASSION-FLOWER

I

WHITE exceeding is the passion-flower,
When it rayeth and extendeth white.
Where is the purple thorn,
Or the robe that He hath worn ?
Where are the Wounds ? From the waxen flower
The virulence is drawn, the power.

II

Dark exceeding is the passion-flower,
When it rayeth and extendeth, dark,
The passion intricate
Of a God in man's debate :
We beheld the Wounds, the Blood is red,
And the dark Blood gathers round His head.

III

Lovely, waxen flower, I am content
With your whiteness of the firmament :
Even as in the Host
The Precious Blood is lost,
On your unblooded disk I see
How the Lord is dying on Calvary.

THOU COMEST DOWN TO DIE

I

THOU comest down to die,
Each day to die for me ;
Hasting with feet that fly
Down from the Trinity.

II

How beautiful Thy Feet,
Even as Hermes' are,
That Thou shouldst run so fleet
To Golgotha !

III

Each day another girds
And binds Thee to the Wood.
I sing, as singing birds,
The glory of Thy mood.

O LOVELY HOST

I

O LOVELY Host,
Thou art the Rose
That on us from the desert glows !

II

Thou art the Flower
Belovèd so
Beyond all other flowers that blow.

III

Thy stillness is
So still in Thee,
We hear the movings of the Trinity.

IV

Thy sweetness doth
Prolong so far
We find it where the grave-clothes are.

V

How fair Thou art !
Thou fill'st the air ;
Behold, O Host, how Thou art fair !

CEDAR

THE BLESSED TRINITY

I ADORE Thee of no word exprest—
Thou hast taught me to adore Thee as the bird
 is taught to build her nest.
I adore Thee, O my Wood of perfumed leaves,
As the darkness comprehending that believes !

I adore the Vision I behold,
As a region stored with mountains issues
 sovereign with its crowns of gold ;
Multitudinous it stands, remaining one,
In its crested frontier, clear to look upon.

Father, Son, Sweet Breathing of the Twain,
Overhead a deep concerting and a plot that is at
 last made plain—
God must die for us : with message of such Love,
God the Father from His Bosom frees a Dove.

NONDUM ERANT ABYSSI, ET EGO
JAM CONCEPTA ERAM

I

WE hear the Trinity
Singing low of Thee,
Singing behind the screen
Of the dark world and green.

II

The Godhead singeth low
“Man sinneth thus—
How hath he wrought me woe!”
God curseth us.

III

What chafe is in the tune,
What treble fluteth there?
A name we catch . . . the boon
Of *Mary* in the air.

IV

No creature that is born
But now is born accurst:
Mary not thus, is born;
She is redeemed first.

V

Tasting of Calvary,
Even as she is conceived,
Her very blood shall be
Of Christ's redeeming weaved.

VI

Now may God turn to make
The sun, to make the moon,
And the young stars to shake
On Eve, in her young swoon.

VII

Such harmony is wrought
The abyss now straight appears ;
God is again in thought ;
Great paths are for the spheres.

And round each axle-tree,
The music of the Trinity.

THE STILLNESS IN PARADISE

“I, IF I be lifted up,
Will draw all men unto me !”
Mary did not thus agree—
Mary opened a flower-cup.

Mary doth herself uplift—
And God looketh on His rose.
As the lovely leaves uncloze,
Lo, God giveth unto sinners shrift.

SHE IS ONE

HIGH, lone above all creatures thou dost stand,
Mary, as apple on the topmost bough,
The gatherers overlooked, somehow—

And yet not so :

Man could not reach thee, thou so high dost grow
Warm, gold for God's own Hand.

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR BLESSED LADY

I

WHO is this ?
Oh, behold the little thing !
Oh, behold the angels clustering
In a circle of supremest wing,
Following her steps, who is so small,
She against the Temple-stones may fall !

Mary's self it is :
To the Temple-Courts she draweth nigh,
Offering
Her three years beneath the sky
To her King ;
With the years that by and by
The years will bring ;
And the deep Eternity beside,
Ere the hills were cloven wide,
When with God she did abide—
With her now for her remembering,
With her as a lovely guide.

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR BLESSED LADY

II

FAIR art thou in thy youth,
Deriving from God's truth ;
Thou liv'st in meekness, very still,
And fillest as a river with God's Will.

Lovely thy feet that climb,
In musical, swift rhyme,
The steps up to the Temple, where all day
Thy portion is to serve :
None tempteth thee to swerve,
Nor sigh at other children in their play.

When Joseph asks troth-plight,
Fair is he in thy sight,
O Virgin, yet thou feelest the control
Of something that doth keep
Thee closed as in a sleep ;
As one asleep thou smilest on his soul :

Or, as the sun that peers
Forth from a cloud, yet steers
No way to cast a radiance on the plain.

Joseph receives thee so,
And mourns, and bows him to his woe,
And mourns that thou shouldst love him back
again.

A JUST MAN

THE Angel Gabriel

Hath left her, and she doth not think of him—

Joseph comes in from reading of the Law ;

She sits, her eyes a-swim :

Then riseth from her seat, and kisseth him.

ANNUNCIATION SILENCE

LO, the wind that blows as it doth list :
Lo, the flame that thriddeth the abyss !

Mary now hath bound her will :
In the house she keepeth still :
And she meeteth Joseph's kiss.

Very lovely as a moon in mist
She appeareth in her place.
Something in her heart doth lack,
For she doth not kiss him back—
Weeps a little in his face.

.

Now from lover's hope he doth desist ;
For she groweth to him terrible
As an army clad in banners,
With those pitiful, lone manners :
And he guards a dream he may not tell.

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

BUT so deep the wild-bee hummeth,
And so still the glow-worm glows,
That we know a Saviour cometh,
And we lay our hearts with those—
All the mysteries earth strives with through the
June nights and the rose.

Strange the joy that sets us weeping—
Holy John, thy Feast is come !
Yea, we feel a Babe is leaping
In the womb where he is dumb
To the song that God's own Mother sings so
loud to Christendom.

High that singing, high and humble !
Lo, our Queen is taking rule :
Faint midsummer thunders rumble,
And gold lilies light the pool,
While the generations whisper that a Queen is
taking rule.

PRAISES

O MARY, Wisdom of the early lands,
O Mary, joy of the Creative Hands !—
Behold where on the serpent's head she stands !

Child to the Heavenly Father by submission,
Spouse to the Holy Spirit in fruition,
Mother to all who seek Christ of contrition.

O Mary, lovely Bush of lightsome flame,
To whom in veneration Joseph came,
And found thee tingling with the Hidden Name !

CALLED EARLY

IT is a morning very bright :
Through all the stars of the long starry night
Mary hath not been sleeping : for delight
She hath kept watch through the starry night.

Joseph comes to her quietly :
“A journey I must take with thee,
Mary, my wife, from Galilee.”
He saw that she had wept,
 And all her secret kept.

UNDER THE STAR

MARY is weary and heavy-laden,
As a travailing woman may be.
She calleth to Joseph wearily,
“At the Inn there is no room for me ;
Oh, seek me a little room !”

Joseph returns. “In a cattle-shed
Hard by, I will make for thee thy bed—
Dost thou fear to go ?
O Mary, look, that star overhead !”
And Mary smiled—“Where the cattle low
My Son shall be loosed from the womb.”

THE SHEPHERD SILENCE

I

LAMBS are round the Crib ; the sound
Is of lambkins bleating round—
One the Babe doth pull,
Tangling fingers in his wool ;
While the shepherds crook the knee,
Gazing full of awe on me.

II

Something they would have me told,
While I watch the little fold.
Lambs are bleating ; it is sweet
How for mother's milk they bleat.
Jesus, can we let them go
Hungry from the stable so ?

III

Bleating, bleating ! Thou dost mark
How they pass back through the dark ;
Thou dost count them, one by one,
Through the door till they are gone ;
Very solemn Thou dost keep ;
And we ponder on the sheep.

CANDLEMAS

I

IF there be indeed a day
We from name to name may pass,
It must be to-day at Candlemas :
Thus the lovely twain we pray,
Jesu-Maria !

II

Mary, as she doth appear
On the roadside; come to rest,
With her Baby playing at her breast ;
And the Temple sheweth clear :

III

With a basket meet for doves
Lying empty at her feet.
Simeon is passing down the street,
And she hugs the thing she loves.

IV

Warm the little creature laid
Close to her, and warm its fold ;
Now between them lieth something cold—
At her bosom a sword's blade.

Mary, sorrowful, most dear,
Sooner than from Him to part,
We, like thee, will lay up to our heart
All His passion, nails and spear.

IN ARMS

THOSE mysteries I count the best
Where the young Child is found
Laid in thy lovely arms to rest,
Or held of thee and crowned.

And first of the Nativity
I love the joyous guise ;
And all the music sung to thee
Is of thy Infant's cries.

The *Aves* tremble on our lips,
The *Aves* are unsaid ;
For, see, the gentle mother slips
Her Jesus in His bed.

And we with her must bend to Him,
And on our knees must sink—
That bed of His the Angels rim
As swallows come to drink.

Thy little One is still in arms
When Simeon stands by,
And saddeneth thee with cruel charms,
And blesseth tearfully.

The Lamb is to the slaughter come—
How softly He consents !
Now must thou home with Him, and hum,
And ponder God's intents.

PONDERING

“I SEE a Garden, my little son,
Thou art praying there God’s will be done :
 The ground is wet
 With bloody sweat . . .
Yea, and fulfilled His Will shall be
 In Thee and me !

Thou art bound, art bleeding in a hall . . .
There is wrath at my breast . . . The scourges
 fall ;
And the swimming eyes of Thine agony
 Have no part in me.
 Lo, Thine hour is come !
My Bud, my Rose, I am distant, dumb !

Belovèd, I can see a road ;
They spur Thee along it as with a goad ;
 I hear Thy Voice ‘Ye must not weep’ . . .
Babe, Babe, but my sobs will break Thy sleep !

To a Cross Thou art nailed by cruel men—
But I see myself and beside Thee then,
At the foot of that Cross—and it is His Will !
 My little One, we will both lie still,
 In one peace together, loving His Will !”

THE HOLY INNOCENTS

I

OUR King is a lovely child !
Mary is feeding the ass ;
The caravans pass—
Mary is feeding the ass :
And no little playmates stand
To comfort the King in the desert land.

II

But, see ! Where the fair child shrinks
Under shadow of a sphinx,
And sayeth no words—
With a whirr as of travelling birds,
Round him settles burning, glad,
Shouting tongue of Bethlehem, many an angel-lad.

III

Martyrs these of Bethlehem ;
God's reward hath come to them.
Fallen on sleep from bloody fray,
As the martyr Stephen, they
Woke in presence of their Father's face :
And the Father bade them come and play
With His Jesus in this lonely place.

IV

Come then, in a blood-red ring,
Rose—oh, rose—blood-red of wing,
And in infant chorus sing
How his lovely martyrdom
One day too will come !

RETURN

"Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos."

I

THEY were very peaceful folk,
Who in marriage-bond did yoke :
On the mountain, Joachim
Prayed, and Anna, loving him,
For him in the garden prayed :
Very gentle wife she made,
And, amid her humble cares,
All his will she welcomed hers.

II

There was peace between them such
That they felt each other's touch
Long time after in their heart,
If they needs must be apart.
When their child was born they saw
 Of herself she kept God's law,
And they held her subject so
As a flower one shields to blow.

III

Joseph is so meek a man,
Joachim and Anna plan

Strict espousals with their maid.
Mary, as a child, obeyed :
But one smile she gave her mother,
Who now leads her to another.

IV

Then a sorrow fell on them ;
Mary must to Bethlehem
With her husband to be taxed.
Only Joachim would stay
Longer on the mount away ;
Anna plied her distaff close,
As she made no prayer for those.

V

Travellers one day did pass :
At the gate there was an ass ;
And their lowly One, as sweet
As an angel, comes to greet ;
Greets her father and her mother,
Lays in Anna's arms another—
When the Baby hath enticed,
Whispers her, "He is the Christ."

THE SILENCE OF NAZARETH

HOW is it that I sought Him ? For He speaks
So little to me through the weeks and weeks :
Then waiteth—and whatever I shall say
That He will straight obey.

The neighbours say to me how He is fair,
It is as music wandered through His hair ;
It is . . . and yet no beauty one should love :
He mourneth as a Dove.

He will fare forth. His story He must tell.
While underfoot I feel the Dragon swell,
I rise as Deborah, though I am dumb,
And bid His Kingdom come.

OUR LADY'S PRAYER

"THEY have no wine !" Sweet Lady, dost thou
care

The bridegroom groweth pale,

The marriage-feast doth fail ?

"They have no wine !" Sweet Lady, thou dost
care ;

Thou giv'st this sorrow for thy Son to share—

"They have no wine !"

Christ fills for thee the water-pots with wine !

The bridegroom's face doth flush,

The guests are all a-rush . . .

We have no wine ! More deeply must thou
plead !


And from a spear-point to man's utter need

It will be won,

Mother, the day that John is made thy son !

FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME OF MARY

I

MARY, we would speak thy name,
Mary, we would cry thy fame—
And, in thy nativity, 
Sweetest praise we give to thee
For thy gift of Calvary.

II

Thine the meekness with the Word
That Eternal Life conferred :
Of thy patience by His cradle
It avails that He is able
In our soiled hearts to stable.

III

Of the martyrs, earliest Rose,
Dear thy merit among those.
Standing by His altar red,
When upon the Cross He bled,
Thine the Blood the Saviour shed.

IV

Mary, thou art well-content
Thus to give in element
Of thy blood and body pure
Very substance of a sure
Record and entablature.

V

Mary, we commemorate
In the Cross thy sovereign state ;
Standing by the sacred Wood,
Yielding up thy Motherhood—
God beholdeth it is good.

STABAT MATER

A GREAT, nailed tree of Japonica,
Red with the burnish that comes of blood—
Very rich in flowering, spreading wide :
And one beside that blows
Tender bouquets of apple-bloom rose
From the centre, or here and there . . .
Our Lady ! For I must think of her,
 How thus she stood,
Angel-soft, as she wound about,
 In and out
Pale, 'mid the blood-red Wood.

LIGHT OF THE EYES

BLESSÈD are thine eyes—they see,
Handmaid of the Trinity,
Christ eternal in His rest,
Laid a Babe upon thy breast.

Something in our sight doth lack !
Thou dost see along the track.
Bless, of thy fair Power, our sense
To receive the Truth immense !

Blessèd are thine eyes—they hold,
In unwavering mirror bold,
Daily, till three hours be done,
All the Passion of thy Son.

Mother, if thou couldst but win
That with thee we look on sin !
Teach us from the mystery
Of thy patience, charity.

Blessèd eyes that watch Him die,
Watching those that crucify ;
Weeping that they do not know
How they murder, handling so.

Teach us in thy lovely ways
On the Trinity to gaze !
From thy Vision may we prove
All the wanderings of the Dove !

“BUT MARY SAT STILL IN
THE HOUSE”

TO the sepulchre they go—
Maries, sighing in their woe—
Sacred spices to bestow
On Him who lieth low,
From corruption to preserve Him so.

But the Mother lieth on her bed ;
For she would not go with them, she said :
And she lieth on her bed,
Dreaming as a mother of her dead.
Mary now is stirring in the room !
Presently they come back from the tomb
Swift with message of an empty tomb.

• • • • •
Then they pause : her Lily is in bloom.

OUR MOTHER

IT was the Day of Pentecost !
On Mary shone the Holy Ghost.

For they had raised her to a throne :
They loved her as their very own—

All of His flock, not only John,
Each of the Twelve she looked upon.

She was not clad in Ophir's gold ;
She was most lovely to behold.

To her who still God's will had done
Beseemed the habit of a nun ;

And of her meekness she was clad
In a long, snowy robe she had.

They were all of one accord
Offering the Body of the Lord.

And there was upon her knee
A little book of prophecy.

The shadow of a Dove astir,
And a great light spread over her.

That shadow on the open book
Was of our Lady not mistook.

She answered ; for it was the call
She should be mother to us all.

And while a sudden tempest tossed
And shook the air, her breast she crossed.

And while they spake in tongues of flame,
She bowed herself, she breathed His name.

And, of that Holy Power, began
At once to intercede for Man.

And as in days of Nazareth,
A lovely Rosary she saith
Of His obedience unto Death.

So humble that her prayers avail,
Though the temptations that assail
Be unto death. Sweet Mary, hail !

THE DORMITIO

I

LONELY art thou in thy sleeping !
Mary, thou must know Death's rest ;
Thy apostles lay thee, weeping,
 In a little tomb to rest,
 At the foot of Olivet :
There they leave thee fast asleep ;
And thy grave no watchers keep.

II

Night on earth hath never fallen
As it falls on this night-fall.
For so deep a peace is fallen
Dove to dove doth make no call :
And the dew lies as a fleece
Covering sweet Mary's peace.

THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR BLESSED LADY

THEE thine Apostle-Son entombs :
 Earth busies with her shoots,
 And violet-roots ;
The monument she climbeth over
 With berberis and clover—
Lovely thou liest in thy grotto-glooms ;
Till an Annunciation comes to thee.
Thou knowest not how this may be . . .
Glorious as on spread eagle-plumes
 Thou risest to the Trinity.

THE MYSTERY OF THE ASSUMPTION

LOVELY Mystery—

That our Lady stealeth from her tomb,
And doth serenely Heaven assume !
This most secret thou dost sow,
Wide as field-hills of anemone,
In the people's hearts to grow.

Nothing to the Church is told :
From the children at her knee
She receives the lovely mystery—
“ Yes, our Mother kneeling down,
Jesus standing with a crown of gold,
Jesus laying on her head a crown.”

As the secret of the Cleansing Fire
Was among men, and no need to tell
Of the glorious hope in parable :
Thou hast told the people of Thy throne,
Of Thy soothing for them of God's ire—
In a whisper—thou and they alone.

EXITE, SION FILIAE

*“Exite, Sion Filiae,
Regis puellae Virgines,
Christi coronam cernite,
Quam Mater ipsa texuit.”*

ONE (WEEPING)

“It was woven of them, the diadem ;
It was given Him of those—
The hands of the buffets and the blows
Pressed it down through His soft, bright hair :
It was given him of those.”

THE CHURCH

“Oh come, who strikest sobs among the band,
Twisting the thorns ! Behold,
How of the Church the Antiphon is told !
Come to the quiet land
Of ordered angels, that handmaiden stand
Around a Woman queenly in her state,
Of gaiety elate,
Of laughter low and musical,
Who of green brambles weaves a coronal,
Tipping the thorns with sapphires mystical ;
While on her weaving she doth wait,
And to her maids relate how this is done
For her most lovely Son, who now must part
From her to His espousals, glad of heart.

O daughters, gather round
To see the Bridegroom crowned !

But first step close, and, for a little space,
Gaze back into that face
Where many wonders are.

Her cheeks :—it is as these
Were flapped by banners striking from a breeze,
Or as the sparkle from inflaming trees.
Yet is it not all bright

Athwart this visage light ;
A tribulation round the glory hangs.
Sorrow is there in other pomp, and pangs
Rise up pellucid as the morning-star
From the confusion of the day and night.

He is set up high on a throne, is stoled,
Even as a priest for offering ;
Yet in His sceptre is He King.
Behold, what counsel He doth hold
With One beside Him on His throne,
When he confers with Majesty alone !
As at a step He lifts His brow,
A Dove with sunshine-wings
Spreads over Him and sings.
O Mother of great splendours, it is thou
That layest on that brow,
In light that doth appal,
The dazzling coronal
Of Sapphires mystical . . .

It is not those !

SWARD

TO A CUCKOO, INTERRUPTING PRAYER

CUCKOO, thou comest unawares,
As with a question to my prayers ;
Full am I of my soul's annoy—
And thou, indifferent in joy,
Dost toss thy voice as if a ball,
Dost chase, and fling and let it fall.
Tempted am I to thy free-faring :
Cuckoo, but there is no comparing !
The Apple hung upon the bough
When, renegade from Eden, thou
To thy freebooter's life broke loose.
My teeth have pressed against the juice,
The foaming juice of sin's delight.
Christ my offences doth requite ;
He died upon the Cross for these—
To win back my Hesperides :
And I remain upon my knees.

A VERT SUNDAY

THESE are the pastures green,
And this the pleasaunce is ;
The Shepherd here is seen
Without His offices.

He doth not shew the way :
With hands between His knees,
He sitteth down to pray—
The sheep rove as they please.

What fountains of pure face,
What streaks of pasture rare
They find in hiding-place !
The Shepherd is not there.

They drink of many a brook
Of which He hath not told ;
Then gather to the crook,
Then gather to the fold.

THE BELOVED

I

FATHER, Thou delightest
In Thy Belovèd One :
And Thou invitest,
Calling us to Thy delight.

II

Ave, our King !
To Thee, we bring,
We offer Thy Belovèd One ;
Yea, we delight in Him,
Till our eyes brim.

HE whose lips have touched Christ's lips
Writeth the Apocalypse.

In deep herbage, by a stream,
He beholds the Heavenly Dream.

Lo, he groweth very old,
But his love hath ne'er grown cold !

Only, since his eyes are dim,
Christ hath sent to comfort him

Vision of the very Word
That in Galilee he heard :

And to him whose day declineth
Glory of the Sun that shineth,

Not as when on Earth He trod—
Very God of Very God.

From the sweet mouth of the Lord
There proceedeth now a sword,

Wars of men and angels mingle,
And his ears with trumpets tingle.

Kings are slain and kings arise
In the passing of those skies.

There is left a bloody trail
There is left a rolling wail.

And the day sinks to its brink
And the marshalled spirits sink.

Brown upon the glistened earth,
He perceives another birth.

Very golden is the stream ;
And he dreams another dream.

He hath written it all down ;
And the sun is going down.

Homeward he must now to sup,
And he rolls the parchment up.

Only, as he ties the bands,
Folding quietly his hands,

To himself, in peace, he saith,
Will it be before my death ?

And he prayeth, turning home,
Even so, Lord Jesus, come !

At the door he pondereth,
Will it be before my death ?

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE

IT is the brows, the infinite, soft confusing
Of wave on wave and lovely current there ;
It is the brows, the marge of the soft hair
In reedy level ; or it is the eyes
Where plumes of sea-birds wrangle with the
 skies ;
It is the mouth where bitter shadow lies,
Where in the twilight there are nymphs that
 mourn
As at the birth of Christ and grow forlorn—
O face, take heed what freedom you are losing !
This cowl is as a cage
For such soft passion's rage ;
And, when the temperance of youth is gone,
You will be terrible to look upon.

BAPTISM

A BABE, still, rosy from the Cherubim,
Set solid by his mother on my knee !
O lovelier the vision that I see,
The oscillating light that sits with him !

O fresh as the first fig-leaf Eden sprung,
Warm as the egg that from the dove we part—
Something thou lackest . . . drops of chrism
 clung
About thee, and God's charms wrapt round thy
 heart.

O hidden Sacrament, O second Birth,
O honey-breeding Secret in the hive,
Stealing as Ver by inches through the earth,
Spurring each instinct mightily alive !

Shall they deprive thee of this lovely thing ?
O Babe, weep with me for thy christening !

THE ONLY ONE

I THINK of her
As the fastness of hepatica,
The little fort of blue that held itself so fine,
 So lightsome and so sure,
In that garden-plot of mine where the snow
 spread :
 I cannot take anything else, or instead.
 I think of her
By the plot where I miss my hepatica.

BEFORE REQUIEM

BEES from loveliest fields of light,
Make our darksome candles bright !
From the balsam beds ye come
 To build glory round the tomb.

Angels from the summer ye,
Angels to our Mystery,
That these golden rods, that stand
Sentry to our dead, have planned !

Pause upon us ; stay from hell
Our poor souls with hydromel ;
Work us wax so fine, its flame
Be of God's the very name.

Bees, O autumn bees, that fled
Home with tribute for our dead,
Very gentle be your doom,
Dying on the ivy-bloom !

THE HOMAGE OF DEATH

TU NOBIS, VICTOR REX, MISERERE

I

HOW willingly
I yield to Thee
This very dust !
My body—that was not enough !
Fair was it as a silken stuff,
Or as a spice, or gold,
Fair to behold.

II

Beloved, I give Thee all
This Adam's Fall,
This my desert—
Thy Father would not let Thee see
Corruption, but I give it Thee.
Behold me thus abhorred,
My penance, Lord !

III

A handful in Thy Hand,
As if of fair, white sand,
Thou wroughtest me ;
Clean was I for a little while . . .
This dust is of another style ;
Its fumes, most vile of sin
To stink begin.

IV

To yield Thee up my breath
Were not enough of death ;
Let me deform !
Let me do penance for my sin,
In death's habiliments most thin,
 A skeleton, and worse,
 Under the curse.

V

As roots of roses must
Be mingled in their dust
With very blood,
Empty Thy Wounds—pour down the red,
Sweet Blood on me of Thy Godhead ;
 Then gloriously create,
 And make me great.

VI

O Victor King, and when
Thou raisest me again,
For me no fame :
Just white amid the whiter souls,
Efface me 'mid the shining stoles,
 Lost in a lovely brood,
 And multitude :

VII

My soul even as the Maid
Cophetua arrayed
In samite fine ;
And set her by him on his throne.
O Christ, what homage can atone
For this caprice in Thee
To worship me ?

IN DIE OBITUS

IN God's Presence stands the soul,
And there breaks on it the Whole—
Lo, a vision that upbraids
Of a face in festival !
Lo, a vision to appal
As from the desire it fades !

.

Shut, imprisoned very far,
As the Afric people are
From communicating things,
Now the soul imprisoned is ;
And it fevers for its bliss
From a solitude that stings.

Domine, there is no sound
Passes that impoverished ground—
Breathing of no kine hard by.
Lord, but there must be a breath !
From the earth that travaileth
Riseth up a bitter cry—
Breathing of no kine hard by
Where the patient spirits lie ;
But our prayers that do not cease,
But the sacrifice allowed,
But the thurible in cloud
Riseth to them for their peace.

PRAYER FOR THE LAPSED

NOT for the lapsed, in storm before the Cross,
I make petition. As in loss
Of some loved animal we feel the Master's pain—
Give the Beloved His creatures back again !

Not that, blaspheming, they in Hell blaspheme,
Making no motion of God's dream,
But that this Head fighteth His thorns in vain—
Give the Beloved His creatures back again !

I pray not for their arid lips accurst—
For the assuaging of God's thirst :
As one that for his dearest doth complain
He calleth, and He calleth yet again !

“AND BLOODY SWEAT”

I HAVE heard one dying,
Not in sorrow, or in sighing,
In a misery of moan on moan,
In an anguish to be laid so lone,
With the blood that stoppeth slow,
With the cold, cold dark a-blow,
With the flesh that murmureth
Currish little cries of death :
I have heard one dying so . . .
To Gethsemane I go—
Christ, of God Thy sweat did win
Pardon for this rebel sin.
Sprinkle with these precious drops
Till the accusation stops ;
And Thou openest Wound on Wound
For this soul of Thy compassion swooned.

TOO LATE

“O VIRGINS, very lovely in your troop,
O Virgins very lovely, very white,
How is it that your lilies droop?
How is it that the lamps you bear are not alight?

Why are you bending downward from the hill?
Bright is it on the hill as for a feast.”
Trembling they sped as to fulfil
Some grievous prophecy; nor heeded me the least.

Downward they passed . . . Oh, they were very
fair,
But stricken as the frosted leaves to doom!
Their eyes I saw . . . Bright with despair
Their eyes, and very lamps to light them to their
doom.

Full were their looks of love and sorrowing
As they passed by me, shaking out a spell
Of sighs, of balms. And is it such a thing
Can be, that they were hurrying to Hell?

THE ROSARY OF BLOOD

Joyful Mysteries

I

VIRGIN blood that doth an instant fail,
As God draweth near her to prevail.

II

Through the hilly-lands she journeyeth strong :
From her blood leapeth a mountain-song.

III

To her glorious Babe she does not sing :
Back her blood falls for His welcoming.

IV

Simeon draws near her with a sword :
And on Calvary her blood is poured.

V

She hath sought Him ; He forbids the claim,
And invokes in her His Father's name—
With blood recollected, and still breath
She enticeth Him to Nazareth.

THE ROSARY OF BLOOD

Sorrowful Mysteries

I

IN the garden, sorrowful to death,
On Thy brow a blood that blossometh.

II

By the column Thou are fiercely scourged,
And the mad, recoiling current urged.

III

Crown of thorns so planted on Thy head
We behold a crown of blood instead.

IV

Now Thy bitter Cross they lay on Thee—
With Thy blood Thou dost bedew the Tree.

V

Nails that rivet to the Cross so slow,
Force the sluices of the blood to flow ;
From Thy Heart a ready cistern fills.
Blood and water the centurion spills.

THE ROSARY OF BLOOD

Glorious Mysteries

I

CHRIST for us is risen. Flesh and blood
He brings with Him as no spirit could.

II

And, ascending, He restores to mirth
Abel's blood that cried up from the earth.

III

Lo, His Spirit falleth on a host !
Of one blood the Medes and Parthians boast.

IV

Mary's tomb ! The stark blood liquefies,
And in lovely blossom seeks the skies.

V

Pure St. Dominic in vision sees
Mary, who believed the mysteries,
With her Virgin blood fulfilling these,
Crowned of Christ in heaven, with rosaries.

HOLY WEEK

THE *Gloriae* are dimming one by one ;
The *Gloriae* are gone :
Beloved, and I am fallen from Thy praise,
Following the Church's ways.
Voice after voice, as leaves in Autumn falling,
I have watched hush themselves and die—
 Nor antiphon, nor cry,
 Nor sweet recalling.

For this the Angels droop their wings together,
And walk as if they could not fly,
Walk heavily, as if forever
God in His glory were put by :
And one, with tears hanging upon his face,
 Unto his Lord doth pace.

A ROSARY OF THE STAR

I

IN the Garden there is set a star
Over where the sleepers are,
Over where the lustrous olives hang ;
And He sees it, looking up
From the drinking of that Cup.

II

At the column, lo, the star is gone,
For the eyes are beat upon
By wild rays that dance before and burn ;
And He suffers in the daze,
Dreaming on God's ordered maze.

III

At the mocking while the soldiers stand,
Blindfold Him on either hand,
And the lovely hair with thorns enlock,
To His eyes the Saints are set
Close in starry coronet.

IV

With the Cross to Golgotha He goes ;
Clear the star before Him shows,
Shining, resting on the skull-like mound,
And, beholding it, He saith
Gentle words and comforteth.

V

Now they nail Him to the Cross with words—
 Darkness is above of clanging birds,
 Birds of prey that clamour for His flesh ;
 And, between the wings, a space
 Where a star shines in his place.

TRULY THIS WAS THE SON OF GOD

I

O HANDS in benediction spread,
O Hands that, loving, broke the Bread,
O Hands that bleed for us instead !

II

O Bundle of these transfixed feet,
So joined, through each one nail doth beat,
O knot of Love, O Posy sweet !

III

And this, the sluice within thy side,
To a hidden river openeth wide,
With fruiting trees on either side.

THE OLIVE-SHOOT

IT is a summer Message, plucked from Holy
Rood ;
There the Dove has plucked an olive-shoot,
For the Tree grows stout and good,
With the waves swaying round it, calming at its
foot.

Young, tender, fast in burgeon on its little mound,
From the water-fields the Tree springs green,
And the Dove espies and doth not count
The Waste of the interminable waves between :

But snaps the live twig, lays it in our lap for
mirth ;
We bosom it and the Dove takes wing,
Or in the air, or from a nest on earth,
Of Holy Rood through all the days to sing.

PASCHAL PENANCE

I

COME, let us sing these plaintive litanies,
Come, let us pass in penitence consenting,
 And sing lamenting
Among the budding trees.
The rain is stirring among the beans, how soft !
We offend God very oft. . . .
Come, for our tears alone can give Him ease !

II

Eden-spring He spreads before His fallen—
Come to the flowering-place of His sorrowing !
 He will do a thing—
 Die on the cross for men :
His blood drops down on their heads as they
 pass,
 On their heads as they pass—
On the white, little flocks of the cyclamen.

III

Let us weep the lovely world we have undone ;
Come, let us weep in the apple-orchard !
God's justice lies at His Heart too hard—
 It will melt in the sun :
Soft and warm and full of deep perfume our
 sighing ;
 For our God is dying ;
Broken His Heart, and the way of our pardon won.

IV

Penance ! Ah, now let us be prodigal
In tears—as the hawthorn-boughs are lading,
 And their roses braiding !
God in the midst of all
Shedding His Blood for us, shedding drop by
 drop.

Surely our tears shall not stop—
Our prayers rise up from our sins, as they appal.

V

No sorrow is like Thy sorrow—that we see !
Patient, and very long and slow be our praying,
 As we pass a-maying
 By Thy three hours' Agony.
Till we pause at the Cross to compassionate
 Thee, the grief of Thy estate,
Nor cease our dirge, till Thy death comes over
 Thee.

VI

What we have done, very well have we known,
We the vilest beneath the sun now living ;
Hell our desert, Thou giving
 Place for us by Thy throne :
Come, let us draw Thee down and bury Thee
 In a garden, under this Cedar-tree,
And make for our God fresh memory.

OF THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR BLESSED LADY

I

WE are sinful, we corruptible,
And our bodies must go down to hell.

II

But our Lady never knew a stain ;
Simply she must fly to God again.

III

This is clear and consequent,
And the ground of our content.

IV

Jesu, rising up at matin time,
To his Mother's bower at once did climb,
That together they might read their prime.

V

We believe because there is no word ;
In our very hearts it is averred.

VI

Mary died : at dawn of the third Day,
Jesu came, and took her as she lay.

VII

We believe because there is no word ;
From our very hearts it is averred.

VIII

Silence bindeth each Evangelist ;
We are sure that Son His Mother kissed.

IX

For the folk hath knowledge of it all ;
Thus with Love it must befall.

X

And to Popes and marvelled Kings
They bring rumour of these things—

XI

We believe because there is no word ;
Of our very hearts it is averred.

XII

On our glorious Queen by faith we look,
And we sing her, singing from no book.

O LAMB of God, our Light, of fleece how
luminous !

If speech would come, as water-lilies rise
From the deep founts and offer sacrifice,
Then might I hope
In majesty of many a trope
To open unto man the glorious Sign
How Thou the Lamb even as a lamp dost shine.

White must Thou be that we may recognise
Thou art the Host, and there must be
In Thy appearing marks of Calvary :
But deep in thought, untainted by event.
Even as from Thy Father's Bosom sent,
Thou must be manifest. The great "I am "
Shines through prevailing fleeces, Abel's Lamb.

BIBE, DOMINE !

Rachel Dreams by the Well

SOMETHING there is that on my knees I
sink . . .

A stranger that beseecheth me,
Stops as an angel that beseecheth me.

“Domine, drink !

Yea, and thy camels, all the weary bands !”
The caravans draw on from distant lands ;
From sands innumerable I quench their thirst.
. . . Deeper I draw . . . Behold, a Form
accurst !

One hanging on a Tree parteth His lips.
As I had borne Him, I must damp His lips !
It seems there is between our souls a law—
I am excluded from Him as I draw :
He dies athirst . . . The camels are at hand,
And speech there is of wooing and of claim :
I hear of jewels and a bridegroom’s name :
One comes, they say, from far to marry me.
I bow at the well’s brink,
Giving his servant drink . . .
Again that sore-polluted One I see,
Moving pale lips to me.

“O my Beloved, askest Thou drink of me ?
Drink, Domine !”

A DREAMER

“Ecce Somniator venit : venite, occidamus eum !”

BEHOLD this Dreamer in His golden locks ;
Murmuring is He and murmuring of His
flocks ;
Yea, murmuring of the bowing wheat in shocks !

O lovely Dreamer, what can be Thy dream ?
Full of an idle pity Thou dost seem,
Jesus, and of an arrogant, wild theme.

How !—Dost Thou ask that we should worship
Thee ?

O Wanderer through the fields, how should this
be ?

What hast Thou done who step'st so wearily ?

Loved art Thou of Thy Father ? He is great,
Thou say'st, and He confirms Thee in Thy state.
Were it not better we should kill Thee straight,

Before of Thy fair dream we are undone ?
For it is truth Thou speak'st : we are Thy sun,
Thy moon, Thy circling stars, O Worshipt
One !

Come let us bind Thee, take from Thee Thy
crook,
And murder Thee, Beloved, in some wild nook !
It is this dream in Thee we cannot brook.

We bind, we cast Thee down into a pit ;
We know not what we do : it is most fit—
Thou hast a dream—that Thou interpret it.

A MOTHER OF BETHLEHEM IN JUDA

THEY are all dead . . . I am sitting by a well.
They are all dead ! More women are coming up,
Down the hill and up the stony way ;
Not one but her hair is grey.

They have murdered our sons because of an
ancient song.

Our village street is long,
And the sun lies there,
And the mourners are not there,
And the day is long.

They have murdered our sons up to two years
old ;

They have murdered our sons for a word fore-
told

That a King should spring . . .
But every one of our sons was a king !
They are all dead ; I am sitting by the well.

They rise up each with a pot on her head :
They will not be comforted . . .

With water they will not wash their dead ;

The milk on their breasts is spread ;

They are parched to drink at the well . . .

Am I one of them ?

I will draw for them,
The Mothers of Bethlehem.

IN PRISON

FROM first to last I knew I must decrease :
This in the Wilderness hath been my peace.
Now in my cell He hath deserted me . . .
I wonder, is He Christ—can it be He ?

I have sent messengers to ask Him plain
Is He the Christ ? Before they come again
I see Him on the road . . . I am sufficed !
He is the Lamb of God, He is the Christ.

I pointed others to Him and they went ;
I was deserted, yet in heart content :
Now He deserts me, as His pleasure is—
His pleasure, stricter than His promises.

So bold I spoke to sinners of the axe,
Who am just now a bit of smoking flax—
He would but quench me if I saw Him nigh
. . . Far off let Him abide, and I will die !

QUI RENOVAT JUVENTUTEM MEAM

MAKE me grow young again,
Grow young enough to die,
That, in a joy unseared of pain,
I may my Lover, loved, attain,
With that fresh sigh

Eternity
Gives to the young to breathe about the heart,
Until their trust in youth-time shall depart.

Let me be young as when
To die was past my thought :
And earth with straight, immortal men,
And woman deathless to my ken,
Cast fear to naught !

Let Faith be fraught,
My Bridegroom, with such gallant love, its range
Simply surpasses every halt of change !

Let me come to Thee young,
When Thou dost challenge *Come !*
With all my marvelling dreams unsung,
Their promise by first passion stung,
Though chary, dumb . . .

Thou callest *Come !*
Let me rush to Thee when I pass,
Keen as a child across the grass !

ST. MARY MAGDALEN'S SAILING

I

VERY lovely art thou on thy craft,
That hath neither sail nor oar,
Nor of any food a store.
Lovely art thou on thy craft !

II

Lovely art thou on thy craft !
Mary Magdalen, no fear,
He who rules the winds is near,
Jesus Christ is sleeping aft.

III

Lovely art thou on thy craft !
And thou art not starved in mien ;
Thou art catered for, a queen ;
Thou of richest wine hast quaffed.

IV

To Provence now thou dost waft—
Preachest at Marseilles awhile—
Preaching is not in thy style.
Oh, for solitude a draught !

V

Christ doth lift thee up, and waft
Softly to a mountain-cave,
There thou prayest, wild and brave,
And the people hold thee daft.

VI

Lovelier than on thy craft
Art thou on thy mountain-stone,
For us, sinners, making moan ;
Lovelier than on thy craft.

VII

Pray for us that we may be
To the mountain-heights set free !
Mary Magdalen, most sweet,
Pray that we may kiss His Feet !

FEAST OF ST. AGNES

OH, see the child, as she doth stand,
Glowing beneath her Bridegroom's hand !
 With coruscating buds
 How gloriously He studs
That fair green wreath to lay upon her head.
 How her right hand He clasps,
 And rigorously hasps,
And with strange marks and token seals the child.
Then of a love more wild,
How reckless He approaches
With immense necklaces and brooches !
To martyrdom He doth molest
With heavy gems that tender breast ;
And from the little ear, a-curl,
Perpendeth an enormous pearl.

In that ear His music soundeth :
But to Him her lip aboundeth,
And the wren-song of her lip
Is of lovely fellowship.

SONG

PLAYMATES, on my head, behold,
He hath set a crown of gold !
Feel them, stone by stone,
These jewels—they are all my own.
He hath decked me with flowers of spring ;
He hath set on my hand a ring ;
To me as a Bridegroom He speaks,
And His Blood is red on my cheeks.

LOVELY, purgatorial blooms
Growing on the sides of tombs,
Lest our lips fall from their use—
Lovely things of Ursula,
Christ's refreshing fall on her !
Kalemire must be blest,
And his spirit fill with rest ;
Equal grace there sure must be
For his sister Hilary ;
And for Venus—" Jesus, pray
That there fall no shadow grey
On our Venus !"—Lovely blooms,
Growing on the sides of tombs,
Lest our lips fall to disuse !

THE BLESSED JULIANA.

Animarum Cibus.

AS often as I prayed
There rose upon my heart a moon
Most beautiful,
And at the full,
Save for one hollow in its face that specked.
I prayed God bring it to perfection soon !

For burthen of two years
I bore that moon of ragged face
In prayer profound
To make it round ;
It came to me each time I said my prayers ;
And I watched on and wished the vision from its
place.

I thought " A Demon's mask ! "
—In terror at the spectre swooned :
More firm it stood
In flesh and blood,
More piteous for the one thing it lacked :
The hollow of its substance fixed me as a wound.

At last God came to me
And spoke, " The moon that doth so fright
Thee to behold,
Consider bold !
It is the figure of My Church, and thou
Art chosen to make full its glorious light."

Then, humbly as a child
Caresses for a birthday feast,
 He bade me pray
 Whole holiday
For worship of the Blessed Sacrament—
“Go, Juliana, go ; entreat for Me the priest.

Tell all the world My will
Is that this Feast be made.” He saw
 My love how scant—
 “ A thing I want ” ;
He said, “ And of thy proffered faith. How
 long
Wilt thou that I abide in My fair Church this
 flaw ? ”

Father, for twenty years
I have kept back this broken toy,
 Given me to mend.
 To comprehend
How I could bear these tidings to the world
Was for my energies too mighty an employ.

Still did that moon persist :
The famine and the hollow there
 Maddened my will !
 How could I fill
The abyss with gold, I in my poverty ?
If I besought this boon would not the people
 stare ?

It seemed God had forgot :
He did not press me any more.
 The world I felt
 Hungered, and knelt,
And kneels—I utter in your ears the words
I should have uttered twenty years before.

THE FIRST DAY

PENANCE

I WOULD make offering to appease !
Great creatures, kneeling on their knees,
Burdening down mountain-rocks,
 Stupendous in their blocks—
I would toil, pilgrim to my God, as these ;
 Who travel in their mass,
Through their mountain-pass.
I would bring magnitude to Thee,
 Who art Infinity :
My God, in penance I would pant,
As the devoted Elephant,
Who, in his bulk he hath,
Bows down and up, to keep his path.

THE FIRST DAY

ELECT

YEA, Thou didst dream how I should be Thine
 own,
Dreaming, with eyes wide from the Father's
 throne,
Dreaming as dream young boys intent
On all the glory they will gain.
With eyes wide on the firmament,
How Thou didst dream the labour and the pain,
The sweat, the fainting, and my soul's consent !

THE FIRST DAY

DREAD ST. MICHAEL

DREAD St. Michael, that with God prevails—
Priests, punctilious, insist
That thou canst not be
Guardian Angel unto me,
Who am but a child.

Thou art come from Hell most wild ;
Thou the awful lake dost see
Where souls wail eternally ;
And dependent from thy wrist
Are the judgment scales.

—O hist,
It is somewhere in the sacred tales
Thou wert guardian to my Jesus small.
When He cradled in a stall
Thou didst hold Him safe within the rails ;
From the murderer beguiled,
From the adder, from the brook,
Thou didst shield Him : it may be
Thou didst guide Him to His Mother's knee,
When too far He dreamed in mountain-nook.

Egypt, with its demon-gods in bales,
And its sphinxes of the mighty fist,
130

Thou didst lead the little One among,
And protected Him from wrong,
Who was but a child.

Dread St. Michael, whose I am !
Save me from the fiends that damn—
So persuasive and so meek,
I may almost touch thy cheek—
Save me, so thy power with God prevails !

THE FIRST DAY

MY INTERCESSORS

HE filleth his home with her ;
He waiteth her every breath :
And looking down on him she saith,
“It is sweeter now than at Nazareth.”
She filleth her eye with him :
She is parted from her Son,
Who is hers ere the world begun—
And lo, all the will of the Lord is done !
They stand by the door at night,
Till the far-spent day be gone,
For they cease not to think upon
One thought day and night in the home of John.

These twain, my Intercessors !
And one is the Lord's delight ;
And the other one is dight
In the Wisdom of the Infinite.
Sometimes, when she blesses him,
Sometimes, when he prays to her,
In their compassion, they confer
Of a life on the sorrowful earth astir.
And they plead for me upon
The stony steps of the house of John.

THE FIRST DAY

ARIDITY

O SOUL, canst thou not understand
 Thou art not left alone,
As a dog to howl and moan
His master's absence? Thou art as a book
Left in a room that He forsook,
 A book of His dear choice,
That quiet waiteth for His Hand,
That quiet waiteth for His Eye,
That quiet waiteth for His Voice.

THE FIRST DAY

RESERVATION

BUT where shall this sighing in me
Fall, as a wind may fall ?

I would not have it die ;
Let it die remote from me ;
My grief must forth to the tombs.

ANGEL

Thy sighing shall not remain with thee,
Nor fall as a wind may fall ;
Thou hast no patience to let it die :
I have hidden it alive from thee
In the warm, dry catacombs.

THE FIRST DAY

A PROFESSION

IT is said of her—

“The Cross shall be on her breast as a
bundle of myrrh.”

I have loved odours well,
Loved frankincense and hydromel :
The Angels know I have been very fa-
After where wild roses are ;
And celled morsels of ambergris
Have risen up to my heart as peace.

.

Will the Cross confer
One day with my breast as a bundle of myrrh ?
This would be, if I would let,
Rather as an English Violet,
That would make all my bosom's room
A very murmur of perfume—
This would be, if I would suffer it.

THE FIRST DAY

MOSS

I LIE as a dull and heavy moss
That spreadeth dry beneath Thy Cross.
I lift for Thy drooped eyes no flower-bell
To shield Thee from the passer-by ;
I sigh forth no odour for Thee to smell,
 Though Thy nostrils search and cry ;
 But my meshes and plots, where I lie,
 With Blood from Thy Feet are tingled ;
 My Earth with Thy Blood is mingled—
Should Thy lovely Feet be once unbound,
I yield Thee a carpet, soft, profound.

THE DIVINE OFFICE

NOBLE it is, and of great servitude
To chain the lips, and from vain gossipry ;
With versicle and with responary
Cramp them and keep them in their pain subdued ;
Till on obedience creepeth hebetude,
Nor would one stir from one's captivity.
Sudden a dazzling faintness to be free,
And from the jailer, now oneself, a rude
Contracting of the chains, till deep they jar
Against the soul's most inward flesh, and stings
Of blood reveal the rebel, if he hides—
Until One enters where the fetters are,
And overthrows the jailer, and beside
The captive singeth of wise, skyey things.

À CETTE HEURE OÙ J'ECRIS

ON the other side the road,
Facing this our little parlour, glowed
Over by a murderous sun,
Is a hedge of holly deep, stone-dun :
And this hedge is as a leathern targe
Reared between us, and the open, large
Fields of mustered sunshine on the plain :
Holy Trinity, against the strain
Of the Devil, and his demon spite,
Twinkling on the fainted anchorite,
Thou the Holy Office dost provide—
Buckler of impenetrable hide :
Faithful in its shadow we abide,
And of God, our God, are sanctified.

ANSWERED PRAYER

I

BUT, where her Voice is heard,
It is the Voice
Even of the small, grey Bird
Of the Greeks' choice,

II

That sang from sorrow's springs,
Though open-eyed,
With all the lovely things
Of May beside.

III

Lo, God blindfolds my Bird ;
And, through the scent
Of the dark May, is heard
Her song, content.

IV

There are would take my Bird,
Would strip her sight,
That, fullest night conferred,
She sing the night.

V

But, lo, my prayer is heard ;
Through full moonlight,
Behold, my small, grey Bird
Jangles of Love and Night !

THE OPEN AIR

AS I pass,
Drawing up the hill from Mass,
 Lo, I gather
Leaves of plumèd yarrow,
And rose-bindweed in a braid
For one drooping in the shade,
Where the sweet flowers are not made ;
 And the butterfly
Never, never thrilleth by.

“WHERE THE BLESSED FEET
HAVE TROD”

NOT alone in Palestine those blessed Feet have
trod,
For I catch their print,
I have seen their dint
On a plot of chalky ground,
Little villas dotted round ;
On a sea-worn waste,
Where a priest, in haste,
Passeth with the Blessèd Sacrament to one dying,
frail,
Through the yarrow, past the tamarisk, and the
plaited snail :
Bright upon the grass I see
Bleeding Feet of Calvary—
And I worship, and I clasp them round !
On this bit of chalky, English ground,
Jesu, Thou art found ; my God I hail,
My Lord, my God !

“TO SEE HIM IN HIS PLACE”

I

TO see him in his place—
The face and the voice of the face !

II

The loneliness that is there
For the humblest soul to share.

III

The mouth where the mischief looms,
Where the demons play in tombs.

IV

And the way God's love is lit
Round his head and cuddles it.

V

The eyes that are quiet nooks
For the doves and the water-brooks.

VI

The eyes as the clear ascent
Of the doves to the firmament.

VII

To see him in his place—
The face and the voice of the face !

AFTER MASS

LOVINGLY I turn me down
From this church, St. Philip's crown,
To the leafy street where dwell
 The good folk of Arundel.

Lovingly I look between
Roof and roof, to meadows green,
To the cattle by the wall,
To the place where sea-birds call,

Where the sky more closely dips,
And perchance, there may be ships :
God have pity on us all !

A LITTLE WHILE

BELOVED, MY GLORY IN THEE
IS NOT CEASED

BELOVED, my glory in thee is not ceased,
Whereas, as thou art waning, forests wane :
Unmoved, as by the victim is the priest,
I pass the world's great altitudes of pain.
But when the stars are gathered for a feast,
Or shadows threaten on a radiant plain,
Or many golden cornfields wave amain,
Oh then, as one from a filled shuttle weaves,
My spirit grieves.

A LITTLE WHILE

SHE IS SINGING TO THEE, *DOMINE* !

SHE is singing to Thee, *Domine* !

Dost hear her now ?

She is singing to Thee from a burning throat,
And melancholy as the owl's love-note ;

She is singing to Thee from the utmost bough

Of the tree of Golgotha, where it is bare,

And the fruit torn from it that fruited there ;

She is singing . . . Canst Thou stop the strain,

The homage of such pain ?

Domine, stoop down to her again !

A LITTLE WHILE

CAPUT TUUM UT CARMELUS

I WATCH the arch of her head,
As she turns away from me . . .
I would I were with the dead,
Drowned with the dead at sea,
All the waves rocking over me !

As St. Peter turned and fled
From the Lord, because of sin,
I look on that lovely head ;
And its majesty doth win
Grief in my heart as for sin.

Oh, what can Death have to do
With a curve that is drawn so fine,
With a curve that is drawn as true
As the mountain's crescent line ? . . .
Let me be hid where the dust falls fine !

A LITTLE WHILE

FLOWERS,

Fall in showers,

Let go, desist—the winter comes !

Fall on the ground,

And spread your lovely strewings round !

Jewels,

Bickering fuels,

Harden your sluices and your gums,

Gem after gem :

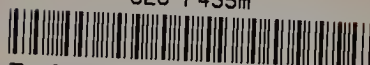
For ye shall build Jerusalem !

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